

**Initial DRAFT (6/20/00)** - For Committee Member Review Only. Will be edited before release.

ECOP/SPC Meeting  
Baltimore, Maryland  
May 18-19, 2000

May 18, 2000

Members Present: Terry Meisenbach, Eric Young, Donna Donald, Jon Ort, Richard Frahm, James Wade, Nancy Bull, George Cooper, Karen Hinton and Gary Anderson.

### **Overview of Session facilitated by Ron Gunn**

The group felt that the session was well organized and presented. In retrospect the consultant could have pushed the group a little harder to reach higher levels of understanding of the impact of human resources decisions on the organizations represented. The joint discussions probably benefitted from the diversity of participants.

In the discussions that followed there was general agreement that we should continue the human resources theme at some other meetings. Perhaps prior to the NASULGC meetings in San Antonio, Texas? It would be useful to understand the values of the 18-24 year old group and their expectation in the work place. Could we identify someone from the system with research knowledge on this topic who might be able to help develop this as a topic of discussion. Another issue that could be developed is how the land grant universities might better understand how to respond to the issues of marketing the value we add to consumers. We still have a traditional focus on agriculture - mainly production agriculture, and fail to recognize consumers of agricultural products who are in fact our customers.

Follow-up discussions focused on how we might be able to continue the momentum on the facilitated discussions on human resources development. How can we use regional meetings and other meetings to create an awareness of human resource issues. ECOP/SPC and ESCOP/Planning should look for opportunities to challenge the system to better understand these issues if we (the system) is to be successful in recruiting and retaining future employees and maintaining strengths of the land grant system.

The group agreed to revisit the human resource topic during our next series of meetings and focus on issues critical to this topic. It is important to develop a synthesis of our discussions to share with the system to create a greater awareness of the real issues. Would ACOP be interested in this topic? Should we plan a National Summit? How do we identify topics and resource people to assist with the presentations to look at the impact of diversity on programming and what issues we must face in the next generation? For the extension system could this be a topic of discussion at the next Galaxy

Conference, other scheduled meetings, annual conferences and extension administrator meetings.

Our future success will not be framed around participation in meetings and conferences but how we in the system help new employees relate to others already employed. Key will be how we utilize mentoring experiences, work around our traditional office structure and frame an organization built on the philosophy of “team work.”

From our discussions over the past day we must also understand the values that the new generation is forming to make employment decisions (e.g. health and recreational issues and our response to cultural diversity). Key will be the willingness of new employees to come into the system and the willingness of the system to accept individuals with new ideas.

Could ECOP/PLC assist in completing an environmental scan of Cooperative Extension, including the total personnel by states; future personnel needs projected by states; and some review of the potential availability of individuals from the traditional recruitment pools?

A summary of our discussions and recommendations should be prepared for the ECOP meeting in Denver, Colorado. It is important that we help the system understand the need to move forward on the human resource topic and begin to share a summary of our experiences with the system to create an awareness of future challenges and opportunities.

**ECOP/PODC Report** (Donna Donald for Keith Kniemann) - Detailed handout was distributed

- C The draft of the New Director's/Administrator's Briefing Book has been completed and placed on the PODC Web site (<http://www.reeusda.gov/hrd/podc/podc.htm>). Designed to compliment the CSREES New Administrator Workshop and USDA Administrative Resource Guide.
- C The Urban Rural Interface Report is being completed. Report expected by the end of the year.
- C Extension Director/Administrator survey's are being completed. The responses will be summarized for a report to ECOP in August 2000.
- C Organizational Culture and Change Work Group is bring conclusion to the scenario process that was initiated in 1998. An article is being prepared for submission to the Journal of Extension or other extension-related publications.

**ECOP/PLC Report** (Gary Anderson)

Future meeting dates have been established: September 2000 in Seattle, Washington and January 2001 in Savannah, Georgia.

### Base Program Strategic Teams

These teams are meeting and doing an exceptional job in assessing the progress being made. Web sites have been established for each of the seven base teams, and a template has been designed to assist in the submission of uniform program summaries. The initial role of the Base Program Strategic Teams was to terminate following the meeting in March 2000. However, the team members felt that they could continue to have an impact on the base program and future direction of the system if their role was continued. The teams have agreed to meet annually in March.

### Reports on Extension National Initiatives.

PLC recommends that we find another term to replace “graduation” when the approved period of an initiative or the objectives have been completed. Once a national initiative is completed, many of the efforts often continue as a part of the base programs. The term used should reflect this fact. Graduation suggests that the efforts have in fact ended.

PLC suggested that some encouragement be to both research and extension to leverage its resources and take advantage of funding opportunities under Section 406 of the 1998 Farm Bill. Is there a way that the futuring efforts might help identify strengths of the system and encourage collaborations in proposal development efforts between ECOP and ESCOP? Will CSREES be in a position to share examples of success after proposals are funded?

PLC expressed a concern that funding of Extension National Initiatives has traditionally been linked to funding. We need to identify effective ways to ramp up the system to address important issues that are visible in the eyes of the administration and the customers we serve. Also there needs to be better communication of the rewards for planning and managing initiatives. Should there be an expectation that there may be extramural funding opportunities? In discussions, the groups recognized that there could in fact be competitive grant funding opportunities under Sections 401 and 401. Key is how we share examples of success in garnering support for extension and extension and research within the system. This should serve as an incentive and recognize individual and collective strengths of research and extension in the competitive grants arena within USDA.

### Recommendations on Current National Initiatives

- C Food Safety and Quality. This initiative requires a major refocus to be more responsive. Guidance will be provided to the National Initiative Management Team.
- C Workforce Preparation. Recommend that this initiative be continued. It has been very successful and an asset to the communities served. There was much success in a recent telephone conference on ways to focus this initiative and garner greater exposure for the work of the initiative team.
- C Healthy People, Healthy Communities. Recommend that this initiative be continued.
- C Animal Waste Management. Recommend that this initiative be continued. It is focused on an

issue of importance and is developing proposals for extramural funding to build upon the successful experiences of this initiative. Also involves participation between Cooperative Extension and the Agricultural Experiment Stations.

- C Child Care. This initiative is just beginning and is recommended for continuation.

#### Recommendation for a New Initiative

- C Financial Security in Later Life. A proposal was submitted to PLC for review. Following review of the proposal and appropriate changes by the initiative team, it is being forwarded to ECOP/SPC for review. PLC strongly recommends support by SPC and a recommendation to ECOP that this initiative be supported.

SPC received the report and will schedule a review of the proposal such that a recommendation can be made to ECOP at the August 2000 meeting.

#### Other Reports

The PLC Communications Group is working well and has established a Web Site which will contain promotional materials that are under development. The Urban Task Force is also moving forward to address issues that it has been charged to do. The Urban Task Force is meeting concurrently with ECOP/SPC and ECOP/PLC in Baltimore, Maryland.

May 19, 2000

#### **Old business:**

- C Extend an invitation to ACOP to have a representative on the ECOP and ESCOP joint planning committees.
- C Discuss with ECOP the relevance of having a CARET representative on ECOP/SPC.

#### **Next Meeting:**

The fall meeting of ECOP/SPC and ESCOP/Planning committees will be held in Mystic, Connecticut on October 4-6, 2000 at the Hilton Hotel. The meeting will begin on Wednesday, October 4 at 12:00 noon and end on Friday, October 6 at 12:00 noon. This arrangement will provide some flexibility for individuals to schedule arrival and departure at convenient times. The meeting arrangements will be coordinated by Nancy Bull. Flights can be arranged into Providence, RI, Hartford, CT and Groton, CT.

The announcement of the meeting will be mailed to participants in July 2000. The format will allow SPC to meet between October 4 (beginning at 12:00 noon) and October 6 (ending at 12:00

noon). It is anticipated that ESCOP/Planning will also participate in the meeting. Eric Young will poll the planning committee and note when their meeting will take place.

ECOP/PODC will be responsible for setting the location for the next joint meeting of SPC/PLC/PODC scheduled for 2001. ESCOP/Planning will be invited to participate.

#### Discussions of the Human Resources Topic

Discussions took place to raise issues that could be developed into a national meeting that could be held in an appropriate location with invitations extended to system administrators and others to participate. Having the meeting prior to the NASULGC meeting was one option. George Cooper was to contact Mortimer Neufville to determine if this is possible.

The panel could address the human resource issue from an entrepreneurial point of view looking at retention and replacement of current employees. What skills will extension look for in college graduates? What strategies should be used to help identify essential “people” skills (e.g. consensus building and leadership) in making employment decisions? The following extension program topics were listed.

- C Models of what is being done in the private sector to screen applicants beyond the resume
- C Models of professional development.
- C Professional development models that support retention and responsiveness to extension issues.
- C Importance of professional references (assessment strategies to read between the lines).
- C Strategies for redefining position descriptions vs. “dusting off” the old position description.
- C Responding to organizational culture change for persons making hiring decisions.
- C Methods of marketing the institution/organization to pools of applicants who have so many opportunities for employment. How do we compete against other employers who are looking for the best candidates within the same candidate pool?
- C Strategies for utilizing Leadership Development Programs for building leadership capacity.
- C How do we develop an understanding of the impact of declining fiscal resources on employment expectations?

The group wanted to have some scan of the extension environment to look at salary distribution, age, gender and potential retirements to assess turnover in the system. Are there records

and data sources that can be used to conduct the scan (e.g. CSREES Personnel records, OPM data, etc.) George Cooper and Gladys Vaughn will look at options within CSREES that may allow a summary of extension personnel issues.

In planning the forum for the system, the group also wanted to understand how we might impact the director' in the land grant system on issues of human resource development. An ad hoc development group was appointed to develop a concept for a national summit on human resource issues and determine whether or not it should be an invitational or open summit. Donna Donald, PODC (chair of group), Terry Meisenbach, SPC, Gary Anderson, PLC, Eric Young, ESCOP and an individual to be invited from ACOP.

The two groups with assignments will develop a concept by the first week of July that will be presented to the joint meeting of the "COP's" in August. Implementation of the human resource topic will be continuous and reflected in the individual and collective efforts of the groups (SPC, PODC, PLC and ESCOP Planning).

#### Discussion of Futuring Issues

The intent of these discussions was to raise issues that could be topics of discussion in meetings that will occur over the next year. These discussions will shape the course of thing and change that will occur within the system.

- . Rural/Urban Interface (including forest management practices that impact urban and rural areas.
- . Structure and Marketing Strategies as they may impact cooperatives and the application of technology (e.g. ethanol, biomass, branded products, etc).
- . New Economic Opportunities ("The New Agriculture Economy"). This might include niche markets and new industries.
- . Distance Learning as it relates to formal and informal education, rural communities, capacity building and rural infrastructure. Respond to the question - Can land grant universities be a player in education through technology?
- . Childhood Obesity and other childhood health issues and cultural norms impacting health.
- . International Extension. Issues related to technology transfer and infrastructure development.
- . Multi-lingual/multi-cultural growth and programming issues. How should the system respond?
- . Agriculture as viewed from a customer perspective. What is the perception of Genetically Modified Organisms? How do we convey the meaning of new markets and value added concepts?
- . Food Safety and Bio-security
- . Food security (Terrorism as a treat to the food supply).
- . Other topics will be summarized as a component of all future meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.